

The Agoge

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Summary: From humble beginnings on a frontier colony, a young boy will become a soldier of the highest caliber, a warrior without peer and a champion of humanity. He will become immortal. He will become a Spartan.

The Agoge

****Agoge****

I never wanted to be a soldier.

I wanted a normal life. I wanted to play with the other kids, get fat on chocolate and then grow up to become a pilot, or a fireman or something like that. Standard childhood aspirations all told.

But the Covenant changed all that.

I can remember the evacuation with perfect clarity, Banshees flying through the streets gunning down the crowds. Grunts and Elites tearing through the fleeing masses as the Marines and local police tried to hold them back. Mother was killed when a Ghost mowed through our group. Father cried out her name but it was too late to do anything save watch as she wasâ€¦ well suffice to say there wasn't much left.

Father grabbed me and together we ran to the starport, evading the Covenant and the maddened populace. I can't remember how long it took us to get there, to be honest I can barely remember much after seeing Mother die. I wasn't filled with sadness, not in the way most children of seven would.

I felt anger and hatred.

_When we reached the starport the last shuttles were then leaving, some with barely any people aboard as the pilots sought to save their

own skins. Father managed to get us through the gates and into the terminal and I can remember seeing blood and bodies. Those trampled to death in the rush._

Again I felt something different to what most children of my age at the time would.

I felt pity, not horror.

Rushing for the last shuttle we watched it lift off from the pad and I can remember Father screaming and cursing, though it all soon turned to despondency. He looked at me with those eyes, so clear and blue framed by a face aged beyond its years by a lifetime of hard work on a frontier colony.

He took my hand and led me out back through the terminal and despite the death and destruction I could feel the love my father had for me in that gesture. There was no escape and in our last moments he was holding my hand tightly, not letting go.

Then as we looked through the terminal window at a distant city getting glassed he said something indistinct to me, such was my distraction at seeing the destructive power the Covenant wielded and yanking my hand hard he led me through the terminal again, down onto the tarmac where there were Marine dropships loading up, the Marines themselves looking worn out, tired and bloodied.

Father walked up to them with me beside him and even as they pointed weapons at us, ordering us to keep our distance he kept walking onward.

They didn't fire; if they had I wouldn't be here saying all this would I?

Instead they merely stood there as Father came up to them.

He begged for them to take me, to get me away from New Norfolk to give me a chance to live rather than die with the rest of the planet. They were reluctant of course. They were military and they were scared too. The sergeant said it was not possible, they were not in the business of taking on refugees.

But my Father pleaded, begged and asked the Marines if they had children. Several nodded and I could see them soften at the thought of them being in my Father's position. In the end the sergeant relented and told me to come.

When my Father released my hand I could only feel it was goodbye.

I cried.

'_Son.' he said, smiling warmly like he had when I had shown him my first drawing, when he'd seen my exam results, when I'd won that soccer game with the school team. 'go and live. I belong here with your mother but we will always be with you. Now go. Live.'_

_It was with tears falling down my face that I walked towards the Pelican. The Marines helped me aboard, one patting caringly me on the shoulder as he strapped me in. Swiftly boarding they took positions

as the ship lifted off. Looking out of the rear before the ramp closed I saw my father standing on the tarmac, silhouetted by the burning city, waving._

I waved back as I recall though at that point I was overcome with emotion. The Marines said nothing, understanding perfectly that I was a child and that it was the last time I would see my Father.

It was goodbye.

The next few days were hazy. The captain of the ship we were on allowed me aboard, the Marines caring for me, giving me a bunk and sharing their rations with me, entertaining me, doing anything to distract me.

Months later after some time in cryo-sleep for the slipspace travel our ship arrived at a Navy resupply point. I was passed on to the base personnel, the Marines unable to keep a child with them, something I understood entirely though at the time I dreaded separation from the last reminders of my old life.

It was three days later the officers in black uniforms came for me. At the time I was housed in a small house on the base planetside staying with the family of a Navy Lieutenant currently out on operations.

The men in black said they were there to offer me the opportunity to do something great. In truth it was no offer, merely a formality, they'd have taken me if I had agreed or not. They explained the war with the Covenant endangered all of humanity, that across the colonies there were children going through the same ordeals as I.

They offered me a chance to stop that, to avenge my Father and my Mother and to possibly save humanity from extinction. Certainly a lot to put on a child's mind but then again ONI are hardly the most sensitive people in the world. Cold bastards really but in their line of work you have to be.

In any case I accepted and within the day my bags were packed and I was on the first Prowler headed for Onyx and Camp Currahee.

They said I was to become a soldier.

They made me into a Spartan.

End
file.